

Appln. No.: 10/017,003
Amdt. Dated February 9, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated October 8, 2003

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for rerouting mailpieces in a carrier distribution system comprising the steps of:
 - receiving a plurality of mailpieces within the carrier distribution system;
 - dynamically determining ~~the~~ criteria defining a suspect group of mailpieces;
 - identifying suspect mailpieces from the plurality of mailpieces by automatically detecting within the carrier distribution system which of the plurality of mailpieces meet the criteria defining the suspect group of mailpieces; and
 - outsourcing the suspect mailpieces for evaluation.
2. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising determining the criteria defining the suspect group of mailpieces based on a place of induction of mailpieces within the carrier distribution system.
3. (Original) A method as recited in claim 2, wherein the place of induction is one of a carrier receptacle and a carrier facility.
4. (Original) A method as recited in claim 2, wherein the suspect group is a neighborhood suspect group that is defined by determining the criteria defining the suspect group based on a plurality of places of induction of mailpieces within the carrier distribution system.

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5. (Original) A method as recited in claim 2, wherein the suspect mailpieces are outsourced to a special evaluation facility.

6. (Original) A method as recited in claim, 2, wherein the outsourcing of the suspect mailpieces includes automatically rerouting the suspect mailpieces within the carrier distribution system for delivery to a location different from the destination addresses associated with each of the suspected mailpieces.

7. (Original) A method as recited in claim 2, wherein the plurality of mailpieces each include a corresponding RFID Tag and further comprising for each one of the plurality of mailpieces writing to its corresponding RFID Tag an identifier of a least one of a plurality of processing locations of the carrier distribution system through which the each one of the plurality of mailpieces was inducted.

8. (Original) A method as recited in claim 7, further comprising reading the corresponding RFID Tags to determine if any of the plurality of mailpieces includes an identifier for the place of induction upon which the suspect group is defined.

9. (Original) A method as recited in claim 8, further comprising identifying as suspect mailpieces any of the plurality of mailpieces determined to include an identifier for the place of induction upon which the suspect group is defined.

10. (Original) A method as recited in claim 9, wherein the carrier distribution system is a postal distribution system.

11. (Original) A method as recited in claim 9, further comprising setting a routing flag in the RFID tag of each identified suspect mailpiece which indicates a destination to which the suspect mailpieces are to be routed.

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12. (Original) A method as recited in claim 11, further comprising reading the routing flag of each suspect mailpiece and automatically routing the suspect mailpieces to the destination.

13. (Original) A method as recited in claim 12, further comprising delivering each of the plurality of mailpieces not identified as suspect mailpieces to a destination address and setting a final delivery flag in the RFID Tag of each of the plurality of mailpieces delivered to the destination address.

14. (Original) A method as recited in claim 2, wherein the criteria defining the suspect group is further determined based on the place of induction and a timeframe of induction of mailpieces at the place of induction.

15. (Original) A method as recited in claim 14, wherein the plurality of mailpieces each include a corresponding RFID Tag and further comprising for each one of the plurality of mailpieces writing to its corresponding RFID Tag an identifier of at least one of a plurality of processing locations of the carrier distribution system through which the each one of the plurality of mailpieces was inducted and a corresponding time of induction.

16. (Original) A method as recited in claim 15, further comprising reading the corresponding RFID Tags to determine if any of the plurality of mailpieces includes an identifier for the place of induction upon which the suspect group is defined and a time of induction that falls within the timeframe, and identifying as suspect mailpieces all of the plurality of mailpieces determined to include in the corresponding RFID Tags the identifier of the place of induction upon which the suspect group is defined and the time which falls within the timeframe.

17. (Original) A postal distribution system comprising:
a first facility at which a mailpiece including an RFID Tag is inducted, the first facility including means for writing to the RFID Tag an identifier of the first facility; and

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a second facility that receives the mailpiece after its processing through the first facility, the second facility including means for reading the RFID Tag to obtain the identifier and to determine based on the identifier if the mailpiece is a suspect mailpiece included as part of a group of suspect mailpieces which group of suspect mailpieces is based at least in part on a place of induction of mailpieces within the postal distribution system, and means for setting in the RFID tag a readable indicator of the rerouting of the mailpiece to an address different from the delivery address of the mailpiece.